

Virginia Department of Education Board Highlights



For Immediate Release
January 12, 2001

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Board of Education Expands Career Switcher Program

Following a successful pilot program involving military personnel, the Board of Education has decided to expand Virginia's Career Switcher program. The Board voted at its Thursday, January 11, 2001, meeting in Richmond to open the program to qualified individuals from all professions. Through the Career Switcher Alternative Route to Licensure Program, professionals currently in other fields can put their life experiences to work in the classroom as fully licensed teachers. The Career Switcher program offers qualified professionals interested in teaching an alternative to traditional teacher preparation programs, while at the same time maintaining the commonwealth's high standards for classroom instruction. The program is open to all specialty areas with the exception of special education.

To qualify for the Career Switcher program, applicants must have a bachelor's degree, meet the requirements for their desired teaching area, and pass the Praxis I and II teacher assessments. A total of 100 candidates will be accepted and enrolled in one of four regional Summer Intensive Professional Induction Programs to be held during July and August 2001. The induction program includes 180 hours of instruction and 20 hours of field experience with summer school students. Upon successful completion of the summer program, applicants will be awarded a one-year "eligibility license" to teach in Virginia's public schools. Candidates subsequently employed by school divisions will be paired with trained mentor teachers for one year. After a year of mentored teaching, candidates, upon the recommendation of their employer, become eligible to receive a five-year, renewable license.

The Board of Education authorized a pilot Career Switcher program for military personnel last year. Forty-two of the 59 service men and women who completed last year's pilot induction program are now teaching in Virginia public schools.

Applications for the 2001 Career Switcher program will be accepted through March 2, 2001, and are available on the Department of Education Web site, www.pen.k12.va.us. Applicants who desire to teach in one of the critical shortage areas (mathematics, science, technology and foreign language) will be given priority. All applicants accepted into the program must commit to teaching two years in a Virginia public school.

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Highlights from the Board of Education Meeting January 11, 2000

Consent Agenda

- Final review of recommendations concerning release of Literary Fund loans for placement on waiting list
- Final review of recommendations concerning applications for Literary Fund loans
- Final review of financial report of Literary Fund
- First review of a request from Virginia Beach public schools to carry over unspent state funds from fiscal year 2000 to fiscal year 2001
- Final review of nomination to fill an unexpired term on the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (moved to consent agenda from general agenda)
- First review of additional examinations that meet the technology requirement for the Board of Education's Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology (moved to consent agenda from regular agenda)
- Final review of proposed amendments to Virginia's Pupil Accounting Regulations (8 VAC 20-110-10 et seq.)

Resolutions and Recognitions

- Resolution honoring the memory of Rich Piemarini, photographer for the Board of Education during the years 1994-2000: deferred at the request of family members.
- Resolution of Appreciation presented by Board President Kirk T. Schroder to David L. Johnson, upon his retirement as Executive Director of the Virginia Education Association.

Discussion and Action Items

ITEM	ACTION
First review of Resolution to Amend the Charter of the Accountability Advisory Committee to expand the membership of the committee to include two members with knowledge and experience in the education of children with disabilities.	The Board waived first review and adopted the resolution on final review.
First review of resolution nominating Fred P. Orelove and Bob Mitchell to the Accountability Advisory Committee.	The Board waived first review and adopted the resolution on final review.
First Review of proposed Special Education Complaint Appeal Procedures.	The Board deferred action until its February meeting.
First review of Board of Education Report to Governor and General Assembly on Public Education.	The Board waived first review and approved the report.

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ITEM	ACTION
First review of regulations establishing the Career Switcher Alternative Route to Licensure Program and opening the program to qualified individuals from all professions.	The Board waived first review and adopted the regulations after approving an amendment to allow institutions of higher learning, school divisions, and private institutions to offer the program under certain conditions.
First review of a request for an experimental or innovative program involving opening prior to Labor Day.	The Board waived first review and approved the request.
First review of a resolution regarding the method of calculating school accountability ratings. The resolution prescribes that for schools administering multiple levels of SOL tests, where the required passing rate is the same in each academic area, the accreditation rating be calculated by combining the results of all levels of tests in each subject area into one passing rate per subject area.	The Board waived first review and adopted the resolution on final review.
First review of models/programs that include instructional methods to satisfy provisions in Regulations Establishing Accrediting Standards for Public Schools in Virginia.	The Board waived first review and approved the list of recommended models/programs.
Informational report from Task Force on Adult Education and Literacy.	The Board accepted the report.
Informational report on the Standards of Learning Web-based Technology Initiative.	The Board accepted the report.

Public Comment

No members of the public addressed the Board.

Executive Session

The Board met in executive session to discuss two cases involving licensure matters.

Adjournment

Next Meeting: February 15, 2001, Richmond City School Board Office,
301 N. 9th Street, Richmond, VA

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